



# News Release

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## U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Investigation Leads to Prosecution in Mexican Wolf Killing

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (Service) Southwest Region has completed its investigation of a ranch caretaker in southern New Mexico for illegally shooting a Mexican gray wolf.

Service law enforcement special agents presented their investigative findings to the U.S. Attorney's Office, and the U.S. Attorney's Office agreed to prosecute the case. The investigation was conducted with assistance from the other state and federal agencies involved in the wolf reintroduction program.

"The Service will continue to aggressively investigate illegal wolf killings to help ensure that anyone responsible is prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law," said Benjamin Tuggle, the Service's Southwest Regional Director.

Wolves have been released into the wild in New Mexico and Arizona for almost 11 years through the Service's Mexican gray wolf reintroduction program. Killing a Mexican wolf is a violation of the Federal Endangered Species Act, and can result in criminal penalties of up to \$100,000, and/or up to one year in prison, and/or a civil penalty of up to \$25,000.

"We fully intend to continue our efforts to establish a genetically sound population of Mexican wolves in the Southwest," said Tuggle. "These illegal actions will not deter us from moving forward with the reintroduction program."

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is the federal agency charged with recovering endangered species. The reintroduction of Mexican wolves is a cooperative, multi-agency effort of the Service, Arizona Game and Fish Department, New Mexico Department of Game and Fish, the White Mountain Apache Tribe, USDA Forest Service and USDA-APHIS Wildlife Services. Wolves have been released into the wild in New Mexico and Arizona since 1998.

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife, plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. We are both a leader and trusted partner in fish and wildlife conservation, known for our scientific excellence, stewardship of lands and natural resources, dedicated professionals and commitment to public service. For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit [www.fws.gov](http://www.fws.gov).

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